

Message Text

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ACTION IO-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-07 EUR-08 SP-02 NSCE-00
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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 01093

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PORG, MARR, EG, IS, LE, SY
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: EGYPTIAN PERMREP'S VIEWS

1. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR MEGUID IN MEETING MARCH 24 WITH AMB
LEONARD UNDERSCORED IMPORTANCE OF PROMPT ISRAELI WITH-
DRAWAL. THIS WOULD BE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR SYRIA
IN JUSTIFYING CUTTING OFF THE FLOW OF IRAQI MEN AND
MATERIEL INTO LEBANON. MEGUID PRAISED SELECTION OF UNIFIL
CONTINGENTS; LEBANESE SENTIMENT TOWARD FRENCH AND IRANIAN
TROOPS WAS INDEED WARM. THE PALESTINIANS WOULD BE FOOLISH
TO SHOOT AT THESE NATIONALITIES.

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2. MEGUID NOTED THAT HE CAME AWAY FROM HIS CONVERSATION
MARCH 23 WITH WALDHEIM WITH IMPRESSION THAT WITHDRAWAL
PLANS WERE NOT YET IN FINAL FORM. MEGUID STRESSED TO
WALDHEIM THE IMPORTANCE OF URGING RAPID ISRAELI WITH-
DRAWAL. LEONARD REMARKED THAT WE UNDERSTOOD WALDHEIM
RECEIVED POSITIVE ASSURANCES FROM BEGIN WITH REGARD TO

ISRAELI TROOP WITHDRAWAL.

3. MOVING TO STATUS OF THE PEACE PROCESS, MEGUID INDICATED CONCERN OVER BEGIN'S "OVERPLAYING HIS HAND." MEGUID ADDED THAT EGYPT DOES NOT WANT TO COMPLICATE MATTERS BUT NEVERTHELESS ALL NEED TO BE ALERT TO FUTURE TRENDS. HE REFERRED TO HIS CONVERSATION ON MARCH 23 WITH SENATOR JAVITS WHEN HE FOUND JAVITS DEPRESSED AND HAVING DIFFICULTY DEFENDING BEGIN. BEGIN'S INTRANSIGENCE IN WASHINGTON WILL HELP MAKE CLEAR TO ARABS AND OTHERS EGYPT'S POSITION IN THE TALKS WITH ISRAEL. THIS IN A SENSE JUSTIFIES EGYPT'S STANCE. MEGUID ADDED THAT BEGIN'S "C'EST LA VIE" APPROACH CANNOT BE ACCEPTED. MEANWHILE SYRIA MAY BE RE-EVALUATING ITS POSITION; DAMASCUS NO LONGER CHARGES EGYPT SEEKS A SEPARATE PEACE WITH ISRAEL. EVEN THE PLO WAS CRITICAL OF THE REJECTIONIST FRONT. ALL THESE DEVELOPMENTS MAY AUGUR WELL FOR THE PEACE PROCESS. MEGUID SPECULATED THAT THE SOVIETS MAY BE TAKING A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH WOULD BE EVIDENCED THROUGH THE SYRIANS. THUS THE EARLIER PATTERN OF THE EGYPTIANS TAKING THE LEAD, WITH THE SYRIANS SUPPORTING, WOULD REEMERGE. LEONARD

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